

Testimony HB 2 - Senate Finance & Claims Committee
MT DPHHS Budget Cuts

March 17, 2011

Mr Chairman; Members of the Committee
My name is John Harwood

SENATE FINANCE & CLAIMS

Exhibit No. 61
Date 3.18.11
Bill No. HB2

The Montana DPHHS has been charged and entrusted with the care of many Montana citizen with serious disabilities. Prudently and providentially the Department has developed and funded an excellent continuum of community based care. The foundations of this system rest squarely on Montana non-profit corporations. The management, staff, physicians, and volunteers are not state-employees. They are our neighbors and they care for our neighbors.

This continuum of least-restrictive services is built on the framework of budgetary restraint, moral obligation, and health-care imperatives. Cornerstones for this structure include the treatment facility at Galen, group homes in our communities, and in home support.

The proposed 66% reduction to the foster care rate (from \$60 to \$20 per day in the Child and Family Services Division) will damage the foundation of care for children with the most critical and intense needs. Who will pick up the care of these children and at what cost?

In conjunction with across the board cuts, the proposed 9% reduction to physician rates will negatively impact the quality and quantity of services provided to patients with both serious physical and psychiatric care needs. This rate reduction will financially harm non-profit corporations that retain physicians that serve patients with disabilities.

Please reconsider these proposed budgetary reductions!

Support Sustainable Health Care Reform